(xi) Audio-visual publicity campaigns to educate road users on how to make a safe crossing are conducted.

(xii) Periodical safety audit of different divisions by inter-disciplinary teams from zonal headquarters is being conducted.

(xiii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training courses also.

(xiv) Periodical safety drives are conducted to inculcate safety consciousness among the staff and road users.

(xv) Stringent penalty to the extent of dismissal/removal from service is being imposed on officials causing serious accidents.

Unfit bridges for rail traffic

2502. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU): Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of bridges on the Indian Rail Network, Zone-wise;

(b) how many of them are over 100 years old and how many are over-aged, dangerous and unfit for rail traffic; and

(c) how many of these are considered distressed bridges and what are the norms and criteria for their maintenance and use for rail traffic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a)

Zone	Central	Eastern	Northern	North Eastern	North-east Frontier	South-ern	South Central	South Eastern	Western	Total
No. of Bridges	13151	8361	19747	5573	5735	18736	14865	19194	14222	119984

(b) There are 51340 bridges which are over 100 years old. None of them are over-aged and dangerous and unfit for rail traffic.

(c) As on 1.4.2002, there are 527 bridges which have been classified as distressed as per norms. These bridges are sanctioned for rehabilitation which is carried out on priority. If necessitated, suitable speed restrictions

are imposed till rehabilitation work is carried out. Frequency of inspections of distressed bridges is increased as laid down in codes and manuals.

Sabotage as cause of Rajdhani accident

2503. SHRI JIBON ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a goods train passed safely over the rail bridge over Dhaba river, just 40 minutes before 2301 Up Rajdhani Express met with the accident;

(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the editorial, improving railway safety, published in the Tribune, Chandigarh,dated 14th September, 2002; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. 7303 Up goods train passed Rafiganj at 21.55 hours and 2301 Up Rajdhani Express passed Rafiganj at 22.40 hours.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The inquiry into the accident was conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety Eastern Circle,and he has submitted his Final Report. Major issues mentioned in the editorial of the newspaper has been covered in the report. The Commissioner has attributed the derailment to "opening of fish plates and elastic rail clips of the cess side single rail in Howrah end approach of Bridge No. 445 by miscreants," and has classified the accident under the category of "Sabotage."

Encouraging bio-generic drugs

2504. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that even as global pharma majors are struggling to bring out new drugs at a faster pace due to lack of product